

SOME
REMARKS
ON A
DIALOGUE

(PUBLISHED by Mr. WESLEY)

BETWEEN

A PREDESTINARIAN and his FRIEND:

MADE under the Representation of another

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A FOLLOWER of Mr. WESLEY and
his FRIEND.

That the Truth of the Gospel might continue
with you. Gal. ii. 5.

LONDON:

Printed in the YEAR M.DCC.XLI

(Price Three-pence.)

JAMES A. DODGE, 2295
my heart and my dear FRIEND, in this Di-
cussion is saying that the real Americans
O. A. D. M. 2295 1880 all who know his
followers are well acquainted with.

A
DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A FOLLOWER of Mr. Wesley and
his FRIEND.

Friend. MR. ———! Your humble Servant;
I hope you are well.

Follower. Indifferent, my dear Friend, how do you do?

Fr. At your Service, Sir, pretty well——What, I see you have been hearing Mr. *Wb—f—ld* to Night, how did you like him?

Fol. Why how did you like him?

Fr. Nay, that's not answering my Question; but however, for my Part, I lik'd the Discourse well enough; I think he has boldly defended the Doctrine of personal Election, against the Cavils of wicked Objectors, very much like a Champion, and a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.

Fol. Well, I hope Mr. *Wb—f—ld* and we shall agree in the Main; Disputes have never done any Good, nor ever will do.

Fr. There, Mr. ———, I think you are much mistaken: That they have done Good, the Reformation from Popery, the Church of *England's* Articles, and the present Establishment of the Gospel in this Island, abundantly testify: And that they will yet do the like, if call'd for, the Word of God declares, when it says, *there must be Heresies amongst*

you, that they who are approv'd, may be made manifest. And how must this be? Except by their standing up to defend the glorious Truths of the Gospel, against Hereticks of all Sorts. When Heresies and Doctrines, contrary to Scripture (such as your inherent Perfection and universal Redemption) are advanc'd and preach'd about, then it is, that the Zealots for Truth, true, sound, upright Christians, are made manifest.

Fol. Don't be warm, my Dear; Love and Gentleness become the Followers of the Lamb.

Fr. I am not in the least angry; but wou'd, in all Places, show a Dislike to all false Doctrine, and in Particular, to universal Redemption: A Doctrine ———

Fol.—Oh! Now you speak of universal Redemption, have you read the Dialogue between a Predestinarian and his Friend? If you have not—— he re——, I'll lend it you.

Fr. I thank you, Sir, I have read it already; but ———

Fol. And what do you think of it?

Fr. Why I was going to tell you, only you interrupted me.

Fol. Well, my Friend, let me hear your Thoughts; but speak mildly and gently.

Fr. You shall speak one Way, and I another; for my Part, I can't affect Voices and Tones, and must therefore beg Leave to speak in my usual natural Way. And as to the Dialogue then; I think, if Mr. *Wesley* made it, he has not dealt at all fairly with those he calls Predestinarians.

Fol. Why so, my Friend?

Fr. Because he ought to have taken the Scriptures, and have made the Predestinarian answer'd in *their* Language, and not by Sentences pick'd out of Authors, without the least Connection. Had Mr. *Wesley* argu'd like one ready to take his Doctor's Degree, he shou'd have taken the Scriptures, which
the

the Predestinarians quote, and have made the Friend disallow and prove false the Sense they put on them; but as he has not done this, I say, he has acted unfairly, and dealt as he wou'd not be dealt with; but it seems to me, as if Mr. *Wesley* was afraid lest Scripture shou'd stare him too bold in the Face. People can bear Man's Words, when they cannot God's.

Fol. But my Dear, you call yourself a *Calvinist*; does not *Calvin* speak the very Words quoted in the Dialogue?

Fr. I don't love Names and Parties; but as a *Calvinist* is set in Opposition to an *Arminian*, I may, perhaps, stile myself so. I wou'd be a Lover of the Truth, and if so, wou'd be call'd so. But suppose I profess'd myself a *Calvinist*, am I, or any of that Sect, answerable for all that good Man has writ? Is an *Englishman*, because such, answerable for all his Countryman's Transactions? Surely not: So far as *Calvin* follows the Truth, so far I wou'd follow him, and no farther.

Fol. Well, my Friend, don't you think *Calvin's* Words very shocking?

Fr. They are quoted so very abruptly, that they seem more so, than when in Connection they really are.

Fol. Have you seen them my Friend, in Connection in *Calvin's* Institutions? I have not seen them myself, because I don't doubt but Mr. *Wesley* has quoted them right, has he not?

Fr. Yes, he has quoted them right enough; but I wonder you Foundery-People, are so very ready to take all on Trust that Mr. *Wesley* says; I know a Person, that heard a Woman say, that if Mr. *Wesley* was to preach Reprobation, she shou'd believe it; you shou'd search the Scriptures, and see whether what he delivers be Truth.

Fol. I trust we do, my Friend; but about the Quotations; the first out of *Calvin*, is in the fourth

Page of the *DIALOGUE*, and runs thus; " I confess it is an horrible Decree; but no one can deny that God fore-knew *Adam's* Fall, and therefore fore-knew it, because he had decreed it; " these are the very Words.

Fr. They are so: But, surely, never were Sentences quoted more unconnectedly, than these in this Dialogue; for this Sentence, in *Calvin's Institutions*, stands in Connection with that quoted in the sixth Page of the Dialogue, which in his Place, we shall observe. But to proceed; the first Part of this Sentence, I know you agree with, *viz.* that God fore-knew *Adam's* Fall, yea, and that certainly and infallibly; for it is a Contradiction *in Terminis*, to say, that God cou'd fore-know any-thing to be contrary to what it wou'd be. Now if God infallibly fore-saw, or fore-knew *Adam's* Fall, he must as infallibly decree it.

Fol. Hold! My Dear; tho' I grant God infallibly fore-knew the Fall, yet that does not suppose that he infallibly decreed it, since it might, or might not have happen'd; you own that?

Fr. As to what you say concerning fore-knowing or fore-seeing, I still assert, that if he certainly fore-saw *Adam's* Sin, he must as certainly decree or determine it. If he saw how *Adam's* Will wou'd turn, he must resolve either to hinder, or not to hinder it; now had he determin'd to have hinder'd it, we know he cou'd easily have done it, by the same Almighty Power, which spoke the Universe into Existence; but as he did not hinder it, we must conclude, he determin'd it shou'd be brought about.

Fol. I grant he permitted it.

Fr. If so, he determin'd it, did he not?

Fol. I can't think that.

Fr. Did he determine or design, whether he wou'd, or wou'd not, permit it? He knew which he wou'd do.

Fol. Certainly.

Fr.

Fr. Why then, if he design'd to permit it, he determin'd its happening, since he neither design'd to hinder it, which he cou'd easily have done, nor did he actually impede it.

Fol. I must own, he might have hindred it; but as it might, or might not have been, his fore-seeing it did not make it necessary.

Fr. With regard to God's Fore-knowledge, which you own to be clear and infallible, it was necessary; it cou'd not have been otherwise; because God cou'd not see it to be, otherwise than what it wou'd happen. But with regard to the Grace which *Adam* had, he might, or might not have stood; and tho' God absolutely foresaw he wou'd fall, yet the Grace which he receiv'd, in its own Nature, was sufficient to have upholden him.

Fol. But what then do you think of the latter Part of this Sentence of *Calvin's*, which says, the Decree preceeds the Foreknowledge, and that the former is the Cause of the latter.

Fr. I answer; the Decree and Foreknowledge in the Almighty, are Things inseparable; for what he discerns by his Foreknowledge, must have been determin'd or decreed, that so his Knowledge might be certain and infallible; and on the other Hand, what he has fix'd by his Decree, was certainly known by his unlimited Prescience; for, says the Writer of the Acts, *known unto him, were all his Ways, from the Beginning of the World*; though, I think, if we speak distinctly, the Decree does preceed the Foreknowledge; otherwise, how is it possible, God should foresee the Event of the Actions of free Agents? *i. e.* certainly and infallibly; he must first determine whether he will permit Facts, and such Things to come to pass, before he can assuredly foresee their happening.

Fol. But my dear Friend! Did you not just now argue from Prescience to the Decree?

Fr. I did argue so: But then it was only to fight you with your own Weapons; you had granted an infallible Foreknowledge, and from thence I argued an infallible Decree.

Fol. But have you any Scripture for this Decree preceding Foreknowledge?

Fr. Enough, *e. g.* *Isaiah* *xliv. 1. 7. I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no other God. And who, as I, shall call and shall declare it — since I appointed the ancient People? And the Things that are coming, and shall come? Here (as I apprehend) the Thing is plain. Who, as I, i. e. who, like me, who foresees infallibly all Events, shall call and shall declare it, i. e. shall unerringly tell what will happen in Ages to come; since I appointed, &c. q. d. Who can possibly do these Things like me? Seeing I have appointed and determin'd how they shall come to pass. Now if God had not appointed or decreed the Certainty of such, and such future Events, how is it possible he should see them by his Prescience only, infallibly sure? And with such Majesty (as is in the Text, say, *the Things that are coming, and shall come?* But do you think, Sir, that God foresees Contingencies?*

Fol. Yes, as Contingencies, *i. e.* as Things that may, or may not happen.

Fr. That's a Prescience indeed! Not worth the naming, much less attributing to the all-wise *Jehovah*. Any wise Man sees that, *i. e.* if he sees a Contingency, he sees likewise and knows infallibly; that it may, or may not happen.

Fol. Well, my Friend, but what think you now of God's being the Author of Sin? Don't you inevitably make him so by your certain Determination of every future Event?

Fr. Just as much as you and your Friend in Mr. *Wesley's* Dialogue, do, when you say, we grant God permits Sin: I say no more.

Fol.

Fol. But God's permitting and willing Sin, are quite different Things.

Fr. Just as different as Two-pence is from Two-pennies, and no more; for they are with me Terms synonymous, and mean one and the same Thing. I argue thus; Permission supposes a positive Act, and that Act must be an Act of the Will; wherefore, wherever there is a voluntary Determination, not to impede a sinful Action, there must be a real willing (or decreeing) it. You must own, that Permission is an Act of the Will, however that it is either an Act of the Will, or one against it. It can't be against it; for then one Act in the Almighty, wou'd clash against another; wherefore, you must say, it is an Act of the Will (in saying which, you'll speak Truth) and if so, then Sin's being permitted, is the same with Sin's being will'd or decreed.

Fol. How!——Can God will Sin, and at the same Time it is own'd by all, he wills the keeping his Law? How does this hang together?

Fr. I answer to this three Ways: 1st, God wills Sin, but not so as to approve of it, in its own Nature; for it is said, *do not that abominable Thing, which my Soul—hateth*; i. e. whose Nature and mine are opposite to one another. 2dly, God wills Sin, not as it is an Evil, but as it is a physical, or natural Action: Or, 3dly (Which is most certain) God wills Sin, as he designs to over-rule it for good Ends.

Fol. But is it not, my Friend, inconsistent with the Purity and Holiness of God; to predetermine the Permission of Sin?

Fr. Just as much as to suffer it; why think you, does not God hinder the Commission of all Sin?

Fol. Why Man, my Dear, is a free Agent, and God leaves him therefore to his own free Choice and Liberty.

Fr. But who made Man's Nature? Did not God? Who cou'd easily have made him in a Capacity that he cou'd never have sinn'd; but he wou'd not do

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this,

Fol.

this, wherefore, Sin is not against his Will. You own God permits, or suffers Sin, which you think is nothing against Holiness. I from that Concession assert, that he wills or decrees it, because the Scripture says, *he worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will.*

Fol. But has not this absolute Decree some real Influence on the Actions of wicked Men?

Fr. No more than my certainly knowing a Thief will rob me, and determining to suffer him, tho' at the same Time I cou'd hinder him, being arm'd myself and he not, influences the Thief to rob me. You see my Determination has no Influence with the Thief, because he knows nothing of it; his only Influence, is his sinful Desire of my Property.

Fol. But your determining to let the Man rob you, does not make the Action necessary.

Fr. Yet it is in some Sort a *sine qua non*, without which, he is suppos'd unable to rob me; however, as to influencing to the Action, I think, the Parallel is just.

Fol. But what do you say to the next Words of *Calvin*, in the Dialogue, which are, " The Devil " and wicked Men are so held in on every Side by " the Hand of God, that they cannot execute any " Mischief, any further than God doth not only " permit, but command: Nor are they only held in " Fetters, but compell'd also as with a Bridle, to " perform Obedience to such Commands. " What can you say to this? Can there be the least Show of Reason for such Talk? Or can you produce a Scripture, which shall so much as look like it?

Fr. I can readily produce both. 1st, Is it not highly reasonable to suppose, that whenever Satan, who is an Adversary both to God and Man, begins to trouble, or vex any one, it is by divine Permission from the Almighty. Is it reasonable that a King, who is infinitely Superior to his Subject, who is an implacable Enemy to him, will let him at Pleasure

rage

rage and put all to Confusion? If he lets him go on a little, surely it is by the King's Permission, who designs his own Glory to be brought about. We all know, that Satan wou'd have all in the like Condition with himself, and had he Power, wou'd effect it. Wherefore we must suppose, as Satan is under the Superiority of God, that whenever he comes out against us, it is by divine Permission, and likewise that a Bound is set to his Troubling us, or else he wou'd carry us quick into Hell. But 2dly, As to Scripture; for this, observe in 2 Sam. xvi. 10. how David attributes Shimei's Curses to the divine Permission, *so let him curse, for the Lord hath said unto him curse David*; and in Ver. 11. he says again, *let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him*. Alas! The Devil and wicked Men, have Enmity continually in their Minds, so that they are ever ready and desirous to do Mischief; and if God only lets loose the Chain of his immediate Power, it is the same as tho' he commanded them. Their wicked Souls are immediately ready to devour (as the Scripture says) whom they *may*. Observe it is whom they *may*; not whom they will. (Saith the Apostle) *knowing that the Devil your Adversary goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour*. To the same Purpose is Job i. 12. *Behold all that he hath is in thy Power, only upon himself put not forth thine Hand*. Here we see, 1st, a Commission to Satan from the Lord; *all that he hath, &c.* 2dly, Here is a Restriction to this Commission; *only on himself, &c.* And upon this Commission, we find Satan immediately went to execute his Power; and after he had destroy'd all Job had but himself, whom he cou'd not then so much as touch, no not so much as *put forth his Hand to do it*, he is represented as telling the Lord, *Skin for Skin, yea, all that a Man hath, &c.* Satan here wants another Commission; *he is ever ready*. Well, the Lord grants another, more extensive than the former; but yet with a Restriction; *he is in thy Hands*;

there is the Commission; *only save his Life*; there's his Restriction: Satan wou'd have destroy'd *Job*, had not this Restriction been given. Give me Leave here to observe what Mr. *Caryl* notes upon this, " That (says he) which Satan and evil Men desire " sinfully, the Lord grants holily. The Will of " God, and the Will of Satan, both join'd in the " same Thing; yet were as different as Light and " Darknes; their Ends were as different as their " Natures. Though it was the same Thing they " both will'd, yet there was an infinite Distance between them in willing it. The Will of Satan " was sinful, but the Power given Satan was Just: " Why? Because his Will was of himself, but his " Power was from God: Satan had no Power to do " Mischief, but what God gave him; but his Will " to do Mischief was from himself. Therefore we " find that the same Spirit is said to be *an evil Spirit*, " *rit*, and a Spirit from the Lord, and yet the Lord " doth not partake at all in the Evil of the Spirit, " 1 Sam. xvi. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from " Saul, and an evil Spirit from the Lord troubled him.* " How was it an evil Spirit from the Lord? Can " the Lord send forth an evil Spirit, who is only " good? In that it was Evil, was from itself, its " own Will; but in that he had Power to trouble " *Saul*, was from the Lord. So here, Satan's Will " and Intention were most wicked, these were from " himself; his Power to afflict *Job* was from God, " and that was good. Satan willeth that *Job* shou'd " be afflicted for his Destruction, God willeth it only " for his Trial and Probation. Satan desireth it " that God may be blasphem'd, God willeth it that " himself may be glorify'd. Satan willeth it that " so others in his Example might be disheartned " from entering into the Service of God, seeing " how ill he sped, but God willeth it that others " might be encourag'd to enter into his Service, be- " holding a Man under such Pressures, and yet not " speaking

" speaking ill of God, or of his Days. Thus we
 " see how God, without any Stain of Evil, grants
 " this which Satan did most wickedly desire. "
 Thus far he. But take Notice likewise here, after
 Satan had executed all his Commission, and had
 done whatever he had Power to do, how *Job* attri-
 butes all to the supreme Being, *Chap. i. ult. the Lord*
gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name
of the Lord; and again *Chap. ii. 10. shall we receive*
Good at the Hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive
Evil? Here you see *Job* has no regard to second
 Causes, but sums it all up in the divine Will. Thus
 it appears *Calvin* had both Reason and Scripture for
 what he says, *viz.* " That the Devil and wicked
 " Men are compell'd, as with a Bridle, to yield O-
 " bedience to such Commands; " *i. e.* as I under-
 stand it, they are kept from going any further than
 the divine Command, or Permission has set them.
 To this Purpose likewise is *Jer. xlvii. 6. 7. O thou*
Sword, how long will it be e'er thou be quiet, put thy-
self up into thy Scabbard, rest, and be still. To which
 it is answer'd, *how can it be quiet, seeing the Lord*
hath given it a Charge against Ashkelon, and against
the Sea Shore, there hath he appointed it. Again, *Job*
says, he performeth the Thing that is appointed for me,
and many such Things are with him, Chap. xiii. 14.
 And again, *Acts xiv. 27. 28. — to do whatsoever thy*
Counsel and Hand determin'd before to be done. And
 our Lord's Words to *Pilate, thou cou'd have no Pow-*
er, except it were given thee from Above. To which
 concurs that Sentence of *St. Augustine, " Non ali-*
 " *quid fit, nisi omnipotens fieri velit, vel sinendo ut*
 " *fiat vel ipse faciendo: "* *There is nothing done, but*
what the Almighty wills to be done, either by suffering it
to be done, or by doing it himself. I hope the Scrip-
 tures I have quoted, will be of some Weight to you;
 and that you will not be so ready again, to condemn
 Things with out, like the noble *Bereans*, searching
 the Scriptures, to see whether they are so or not.

Fol. We'll pass this, my Friend, and look at another of *Calvin's* Expressions, which is in the sixth Page of the Dialogue, and runs thus, "God speak-
 " eth unto them that they may be deafer, he gives
 " them Light that they may be blinder, he offers In-
 " structions unto them that they may be more igno-
 " rant, and uses the Remedy that they may not be
 " healed." What possible Evasion can possibly
 throw a favourable Light on this notorious shocking
 Expression?

Without the least Evasion, I can give a Scriptural Light to it, which shall discover your Ignorance in asking for one, and theirs also who writ it merely to set the Predestinarians in a terrible frightening Light. *Calvin* in this Passage (had Mr *Wesley* been so good as to have taken notice of it, I need not have told now) is opening those two remarkable Passages, *Matt.* xiii. 13, 14. and *Job.* xii. 39, 40. In the first our Lord is answering a Question his Disciples put to him, *Why speakest thou to them in Parables?* the Answer is made, *therefore speak I in Parables because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand;* and in *John* it is said, *therefore they could not believe because Isaias saith again, he hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them.* These are the Words which caus'd *Calvin's* Expression; he did not talk without Book as you do. But try now, and see whether there be any Difference between *Calvin's* words and the Scriptures, nay, whether in your own Language the Scripture is not more shocking. But see to it, that while you are zealous without Knowledge, you are not at last found fighting against God.

Fol. Let us now consider the other Sentence of *Calvin's*, which says, "Many Nations, together with
 " their Infants, were involved without Remedy in
 " eternal

“ eternal Punishment.” VVhat think you of this Expression?

Fr. Hold! First let me here make a Remark on Mr. *Wesley*'s Dialogue in general; And,

1st. Then I think he has acted a very weak Part---
---in---

Fol. In what?

Fr. VVhy in picking Sentences from one Author and another, without the least Connection, and placing them at Random to any Question.

2dly. I think he has acted maliciously, in----

Fol. That can never be, for I'm sure, my dear, he loves you all.

Fr. You mean, he and you say so. But does it not plainly appear to be so in his chusing those Passages which he thinks most shocking, merely to dress up Predestination in a frightful Appearance: Tell him from me, he does not in this act like a Christian, neither does he argue so (as might be expected) from one who has travers'd a College seven Years. And 3dly, How silly does it appear, for him to make a Sentence of *Maccovius*'s, an Explanation to one of *Zanchius*'s: He'd not take it well, was I to interpret his Saying by those of *Arminius*. But now for the Sentence; Mr. *Wesley* has placed it as an Answer to, what becomes of dying Infants? For which, I'm certain it was never design'd.

Fol. But what do you say to this Expression?

Fr. Why was I to answer it as abruptly as Mr. *Wesley* has quoted it, I wou'd say it carried no more in it than this; that the whole Universe, young and old, high and low, were by the Fall involv'd in such a State and Condition in which they had nothing to expect but eternal Punishment, as the Demerit of *Adam*'s Sin. As they stand unconnected in the Dialogue, an unconnected Answer may be perhaps the best for 'em.

Fol. Nay, but my Dear, deal honestly; answer as well as you can to *Calvin*'s Meaning.

Fr.

Fr. Why if I do, I shall only prove what *Calvin* asserts, to follow on your own Principles.

Fol. That is yet to be prov'd.

Fr. What then is your Opinion of dying Infants?

Fol. As there is nothing immediately reveal'd, and secret Things belong to God, every one must judge as he pleases.

Fr. Very good; we'll leave then Mr. *Calvin's* Thoughts of Infants, and examine that Part which says, "Many Nations were involv'd without Remedy, &c." But here first, as I promis'd before, let me just observe, that this Sentence in *Calvin's Instit.* stands in Connection with that quoted in the fourth Page of Mr. *Wesley's* Dialogue, which (by the Way) shows how ready some People are to rent and disunite Things merely to serve a Turn.

Fol. Now then, to the Point; I absolutely deny, that any are left without Remedy, *i. e.* I believe and assert, that Christ did equally die for one Person as for another; and that God sincerely desires that all universally may be sav'd.

Fr. Why then are not all sav'd; for it is said, *What his Soul desireth, even that he doth.* And again, it is said, *Isa. xlvi. 10. His Counsel shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure.* And *Psa. xxxiii. 11. The Counsel of the Lord is for ever, and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations.* But perhaps you will say, he had not Power to effect his Designs?

Fol. No certainly. He has Power Almighty.

Fr. Why don't he bring about his Purposes then? He must either not have Power, or else not design to save all, seeing all are not sav'd.

Fol. He has left Mankind to their free Choice, and therefore will not intermeddle.

Fr. This is worse and worse; for hereby you charge God with Folly, both God the Father, and God the Son. God the Father in desiring the Salvation of all, when he knows the greatest Part will be lost; and leaving likewise the Salvation of those

he

he earnestly desires to be happy, to such a precarious Foundation as their free Agency. No wise Man wou'd leave his most important Affairs to the Management of a Fool, who by Chance might act well; but it is the greatest Wonder if he does: Such Thoughts are unworthy the all-wise *Jehovah*. You make God the Son equally unwise, viz. in laying down his Life for those he knew wou'd never be the better for it; and he himself losing his Labour; or at the best, on the Notion of free Agency, he laid it down at hap-hazard, not knowing whether it wou'd be of Service or not; whether any or none shou'd be sav'd by it: Are not these Things equally as shocking as any of *Calvin's* Expressions? And as horrible as any Thing in the Decrees? Is it not terrible to think of it? That God foresees Millions of Souls will be eternally in Hell, and can hinder them, but won't; where's his universal Love? Besides, it is said, *whom he loves, he loves to the End*; now if he loves all Mankind at one Time, and not at another, he is then changeable. You own he does not love them when he punishes them with Hell-fire.

Fol. Most assuredly.

Fr. Why then you must suppose him changeable; whereas it is said, *he is not Man that he shou'd change, and with him (says Paul) there is not the Shadow of Turning.*

Fol. But your Doctrine of Predestination is novel.

Fr. That is not to the Purpose. And were I able to bring the Testimony of all the Fathers (*and Mothers too*) since the Creation, it wou'd be no Proof in Reality of the Point. But since *Mr. Wesley* in the Dialogue, says, that *St. Augustine* exclaims against Predestination, after he had held it, I desire him, for better Advice, to read his Book of Retractions. As to Antiquity; it wou'd but be begging the Question, were I to say, this Doctrine is as ancient as the Bible; for there it is written in plain Characters. But however, tho' the Fathers are no Rule, yet I am perswaded more may be quoted who held it, than who did not; and the plain Reason why we hear so

little of it for the two first Centuries, is, because it was not disputed. And it is very observable, says the learned Dr. *Edwards*, that the Fathers were more careful of what they said, when oppos'd, than at other Times; and he quotes St. *Jerom* for this, who says, that the Fathers before Arius's Time, deliver'd some Things unadvisedly, and with little Heed to what they said; yea, they said such Things, as can hardly escape the Cavils of wicked Men, *Apol. 2. adv. Ruffin.* And of *Chrysostom*, it is remark'd by another Father, that before *Pelagius* appear'd, he was negligent and careless in what he said of Free-will and Free-grace; and St. *Jerom* observes of *Origen* and *Eusebius*, and others, that they sometimes writ not their own Sentiments, but others; and at other Times, they spoke not what they thought, but what the present Occasion compell'd to, see *Apol. adv. Ruffin.* Wherefore altho' the Fathers are not to be so very much depended on. But hear what St. *Augustine* says, " the Number of the Elect are so certain, that they can neither be increas'd or diminish'd, " see *De Correp. & Grat. II. Cap. 3.* And he tells us, that some of the Fathers, both before him, as well as Cotemporary with him, held the same (tho' they had not Occasion directly to speak of it.) And he quotes for this, Passages out of *Cyprian*, who flourish'd Anno Dom. 250. and out of *Ambrose* likewise, who flourish'd Anno Dom. 373. see *De bono Perseverentiæ, Cap. 15.* and *Isidor.* who flourish'd about the Beginning of the fourth Century, speaks expressly of a twofold Predestination of the Elect to Rest, and the Reprobation to Death, see *Sent. Lib. 1. Cap. 6.* And St. *Chrysostom*, who flourish'd under *Honorius*, 46th Emperor of Rome, Anno Dom. 354. interpreting that Text, *I lay down my Life for my Sheep*, &c. understands by Sheep, the People of God, that were foreknown and predestinated by him. See *Homil. 59. in 10 Cap. Johan.* To which Things may be added a Testimony of very great Antiquity; that of the antient Church of *Smyrna*, which in an Epistle of hers, Anno Dom. 169. thus writes, *We shall never forsake Christ, who suffer'd for the Salvation*

of the whole World of those that are sav'd: ὑπερ τῆς
 τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τῶ σωζομένων σωτηρίας. These Things
 show the Absurdity and Falsity of that Assertion in
 the Dialogue, that all Antiquity, for the four first
 Centuries is against. Surely Mr. *Wesley* don't think
 to lead all the World blindly, because he does a few
 weak Creatures, who are his Attendants? We know
 better Things, than to take all on Trust that he
 says, because he wears the *Toga*, and has been at one
 of the Eyes of the Nation, to get his great Know-
 ledge from. St. *Augustine* has these express Words,
Procul dubio noverant (i. e. Patres) Prædestinationem:
Without Doubt, the Fathers were acquainted with the
Doctrine of Predestination. And as for the Church of
England, to whose Communion you belong, she
 has constantly maintain'd it; witness her seventeenth
 Article, with the nine Articles of *Lambeth*, agreed
 to by the Archbishops of both Provinces, and sub-
 scrib'd by many Bishops and Graduates in the Uni-
 versities, and others. Let us now take Notice of what
 your *Dux*, or General, Mr. *Wesley*, makes the Friend
 speak concerning Unbelief. But says he, " Suppo-
 sing *Esau* be damn'd, what was he damn'd for?

" *Pr.* For Unbelief, &c.

" *Friend.* By what Faith are you sav'd.

" *Pred.* By Faith in Christ who gave himself
 for me.

" *Friend.* But did he give himself for *Esau*, if
 not, you say he is damn'd for not believing a
 Lie. " What a mighty Conquest is here! Does
 my being sav'd by Faith in Christ, who gave him-
 self for me, suppose that others are damn'd, for not
 believing with the same saving Faith? Is there no
 Unbelief but what is concerning Christ's dying for
 Sinners? Is not all Sin Unbelief, however flows from
 it? Wherefore, if a Man be condemn'd for Sin, he
 may be condemn'd for Unbelief, without his ever
 being requir'd to believe that Christ dy'd for him in
 Particular. If saving Faith be the Gift of God, no
 one will be condemn'd for not having that, and yet
 be condemn'd for Unbelief too. But what do you
 think Men are condemn'd for?

Fol. Why for disbelieving that Christ dy'd for them.

Fr. That can't be, for all who hold universal Redemption, do believe it.

Fol. Yes, but my Dear, I mean that he dy'd for them in Particular.

Fr. That must not be, according to your Scheme.

Fol. Why?

Fr. Because, you hold that Christ dy'd for all alike, and then it wou'd be believing a Lie, to think that he dy'd for me, or any one in Particular; however, this is like the rest of your Inconsistencies. But I find Mr. *Wesley*, towards the End of his Dialogue, has thought more deliberately of Things, and is turn'd down-right Predestinarian.

Fol. How so! My dear Friend!

Fr. I mean, he is so far turn'd, as to acknowledge Election and Reprobation, in Words, as the Prodestinarians do: For, says he, Dialogue, *Pag.* 7. " I mean this (*i. e.* by Election and Reprobation) " 1st, God did decree to elect in Christ, all who " *should* believe, and this Decree is not built on a- " ny Goodness in the Creature, but on his own " Goodness. 2dly, God did from the Beginning " decree to reprobate all who *should* obstinately and " finally continue in Unbelief. " Why, what think you was the Matter with Mr. *Wesley*, when he writ this? He was a sleepy sure, or else tir'd with Writing, because he has forgot the Terms he uses when he is himself, *viz.* who *wou'd* believe, and who *wou'd* continue in Unbelief; but now it is like the absolute Predestinarian, who *shou'd* believe, &c.

Fol. But Mr. *Wesley* means not, but that all may be sav'd; he does not mean your absolute unconditional Election, as you find by the Answer to the last Question, *Page* 7.

Fr. Indeed, I thought he did not know what he meant himself, however he had entirely forgot his old Way of terming Matters; but what is it *you* People think of Justification and final Perseverance?

Fol. Hold! My Dear, let me hear what your Thoughts

Thoughts of absolute unconditional Election and Reprobation are built upon.

Fr. On the whole Tenour of Scripture; but in the main *you* are for absolute unconditional Election and Reprobation as well as me.

Fol. By no means, my Friend.

Fr. You think that Faith is the Gift of God alone, and that the Creature, in a natural State, can't savingly Believe on Christ for Salvation.

Fol. Certainly. For our Saviour expressly says *This is the Work of God, that you believe.*

Fr. If Faith be the Gift of God, he gives it then to whom he pleases: And it is no longer the Duty of every Individual to believe savingly. We are sure all have not saving Faith.

Fol. That's true, but all ought to believe, for it is said, *If thou believest, &c.*

Fr. Without Faith no Man shall see the Lord. But if it be the sole Gift of God it is no one's Fault that he has it not. Is it your Fault that you are not the King's Secretary (supposing you qualify'd for it) when it is in the King's Gift, and he bestows it on whom he pleases? But perhaps you'll say, that Faith is the Term of our Acceptance.

Fol. I think it is.

Fr. Why then it is a Condition on our Part.

Fol. Certainly.

Fr. If so, 'tis no longer the Free-Gift of God. And Election is built on some Goodness in us, which Mr. Wesley denies. But why does not God give saving Faith to all?

Fol. Because they refuse it.

Fr. Is that probable? that their refusing it should balk God of his End. Or is it reasonable he should determine to let them do so? Will a Parent be hindered giving Physick to preserve his Child's Life, merely because the Child don't like it, and refuses it? But it is said, *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* But why shou'd God offer his Gifts to those he knows will refuse 'em?

Fol. He does it that they may have nothing to charge

charge him with, or say, that he has not done enough for them.

Fr. How can that be, when he might easily have done more, and by his Omnipotence have made them willing to be saved in his own way? To sum up all then, you hold an unconditional absolute Election, by saying, it was not moved by any Goodness in Man. And yet Mr. *Wesley*, and you with him, in the last Answer of the Dialogue say, you think it can't be found in *Holy Writ*. VVhat Inconsistency! Again, You own saving Faith to be the Gift of God, and none have it but the Elect; and you say also, that God knew he would not give it to all. What is this but absolute particular Election and Reprobation? But you know not the things you affirm yourselves. My Belief now of Salvation is this, That some are chosen in Christ from the Foundation of the world, grounded on that Text in 1 *Ephes.* which says, *As he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.* And I believe that in Christ is treasured up a Fulness of Grace to bring the chosen ones to eternal Glory, grounded on that Text in the *Colossians*, *It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell.* I believe Faith is the Gift of God, because it is said — *thro' Faith, and that not of yourselves, &c.* I believe that Sanctification, Holiness of Heart and Life, are necessary to an Admission into Heaven, and that they are Means appointed to come between the Decree to Salvation, and Salvation itself; and this I ground on that Text in 1 *Thes.* *Who hath from the Beginning chosen you to Salvation thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth.* And as to Reprobation, I believe, God has rejected some, to whom he never design'd to give saving Faith, and these are continually sitting for Destruction. This I ground on those Texts which say, *Men of Old fore-appointed to this Condemnation; and all are not Israel, who are of Israel; and again, they believe not* (says our Saviour) *because they are not of my Sheep.* I believe likewise, that Men voluntarily go down to the Chambers of Death and Hell, and like it better even than Heaven itself; this I ground on the Text, which say, *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Lusts of your Father will ye do; and Men love Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil.* I believe that God created no Man merely to damn him, but purely for his own Glory; because it is said, *all Things are, and for his Pleasure were created; and he hath made*

made all Things for himself. He is glorify'd in the Salvation of some, and in the Destruction of others who are Sinners; this I ground on that Text, which says, *we are a sweet smelling Savour unto God, in those that are sav'd, and in those that perish.* Thus I have given you a short Summary of my Thoughts of absolute, personal, unconditional Election; now concerning Justification and Perseverance.

Fol. I believe then, that after a Sense of our Justification, we may fall away eternally.

Fr. When we were pardon'd in Christ, were we not forgiven all?

Fol. Yes; but then our Unbelief may shut us out of Heaven, and contract the Debt.

Fr. So then, I suppose, we were not forgiven Unbelief? But it is said, *tho' we believe not, he abides faithful, and cannot deny himself.* But then, if we be careless, and don't continue Faithful, you say, we may shut ourselves out of God's Love? And it will be entirely our own Faults.

Fol. Certainly.

Fr. That can't be; for the Apostle tells us, *that Christ is the Author and finisher of our faith*; so that if we are not made Faithful to the End, it will be Christ's Fault. Besides, you know, the Character to be given to those who are to go into outward Darkness, is, *depart from me, I never knew you.* And how can that be said, when Christ knows some so much as to justify them, and give them Faith? Thus you make God frustrate in his Designs, you make him changeable, you make Christ's Intercession vain, who is interceding by Virtue of his Blood in Heaven continually for his justify'd ones.

Fol. So long as we are Faithful, he interceeds for us.

Fr. I tell you again, it is he himself that is to make us Faithful.

Fol. But my dear Friend, does not Free-grace display itself most in universal Redemption.

Fr. No. Because it does not inevitably secure any one's Happiness, but leaves all at Hazard; so that perhaps there may be none at all sav'd.

Fol. But is not particular Redemption a narrow spirited Doctrine? Is it not very uncomfortable.

Fr. As for the Narrowness of it, that is nothing to the Purpose; for let what Side will be true, this is a Truth, *that few there are who shall be sav'd, few go in at the strait Gate*; and as for the Uncomfortableness of it, it is certainly more comfortable than that Doctrine which teaches that we may after once being belov'd of God, perish eternally. I'm sure this must be uncomfortable to one who sees the Naughtiness of his own Heart, who sees how apt he is to turn aside.

Fol. Does not a Certainty of our Salvation give a Licence to sin? Why if I shall be saved, I shall be saved.

Fr. It gives a License to none but those who know nothing what the Grace of God means: for that continually leads us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, &c. And he that has once tasted of the Love of

of God, will naturally love him again. *For we love him* (says St. John) *because he first loved us.* And in the Nature of Things, Love will beget Love. Was the King to promise that I should be always his Favourite, would not that naturally lead me to fear dis-obliging him; and though I might offend him, would not his Graciousness make me loath myself for it.

Fol. Well, my dear Friend, only give me a Sense to the following Texts agreeable to your Sentiments, and we'll have done. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no Pleasure in the death of the Wicked.* 1 Tim. ii. 4. *God willeth all men to be saved. He is not willing that any should perish,* 2 Pet. iii. 9. And St. John says, *He is a Propitiation for our Sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.* And again, *As in Adam all dy'd, so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

Fr. I must be very brief upon all these. As to the first in Ezekiel, I answer, that it has relation to the Jews, as a Church and People: and therefore don't seem to relate to eternal Death: Or if it must relate to that, I answer, the foregoing Verse opens the Meaning---For if the People were brought to this Confession as to say, *If our Sins be upon us, how shall we then live?* then the Prophet was to speak in the Words of the Lord, *Verily I have no Delight in the Death, &c.* When a Soul is brought to a Sense of a want of justifying Righteousness, and that he cannot live if his Sins be upon him, *i. e.* imputed to him, then the Lord declares he has no Pleasure in his Death. As for the second Text; the *all Men* in it plainly, by consulting the two foregoing Verses, means all sorts of Men. To which Exposition St. Augustin agrees, and interprets *all Men*, by our Saviour's Words, *Ye are the every Herb, i. e.* says he, every kind of Herb. As to the third Text, *Not willing that any should perish*, refers manifestly to the *Us* in the same Verse, *Long-suffering to Us-ward, not willing, &c.* What *Us*? but the Beloved in the preceding Verse: and to those in ch. i. and ver. 1. *Who had obtained precious faith.* These God is unwilling should perish, yea he is so unwilling, that he will inevitably glorify them, *for he giveth to his Sheep eternal Life, and they shall never perish.* As for the Text which speaks of the *whole World*: I take it to mean the World of the Gentiles, as well as the Jews; *i. e.* Some of both sorts: But Augustin says, it manifestly means the Church of God, *Totus ergo Mundus est Ecclesia.* The whole World therefore is the Church. See Tract. 87. in Johan. As to your last Text, which is in 1 Cor. xv. 22. *As in Adam all dy'd, &c.* I answer, it has Reference to the two several Heads, Adam and CHRIST: Adam, the Head of universal Nature, and CHRIST the Head of his Church. Wherefore, as in Adam all his dy'd, so in CHRIST all his shall be made alive. But this Text will never do for you, unless you prove that every Individual are made alive by a Work of Grace on their Souls. And thus I have briefly answered your Texts.

Fol. Well, my dear Friend, I wish you well: I must be going.

Fr. Mr.----- I heartily wish you well, and am your very humble Servant: Hoping you'll think of these Things.